Client Consent and Share Options

Intended Audience

- All ARIES Users

Policy Background

Clients may choose whether or not to share their ARIES data with other agencies at which they receive services. Information shared between these agencies may include client demographics, contact information, medical history, and service data. However, information related to mental health, alcohol and substance use, and legal services is not shared between service providers regardless of a client's share status.

Clients who choose to share their information are referred to as "share clients" and those who choose not to share their information are referred to as "non-share clients." The ARIES Client Share/Non-Share Consent Form (Revised July 2010) documents their choice. Clients must complete this form in order to receive services. The form must be renewed once every three years or whenever clients want to changes their choice.

The ARIES Client Share/Non-Share Consent Form does not take the place of existing consent or release of information forms required by an agency, a fiscal agent, or a program.

Regardless of a client's share status, authorized fiscal agents, local health departments, and the State Office of AIDS (OA) may access client data for the purposes of program monitoring and reporting, statistical analysis, and research activities. Additionally, information about a client's HIV diagnosis may be disclosed to the State Office of AIDS, local health departments, and service providers for the investigation, control, and surveillance of HIV/AIDS (Health and Safety Code section 121025).

As with any ARIES user, fiscal agents, local health departments, and OA must protect the security and confidentiality of client data.

Procedures

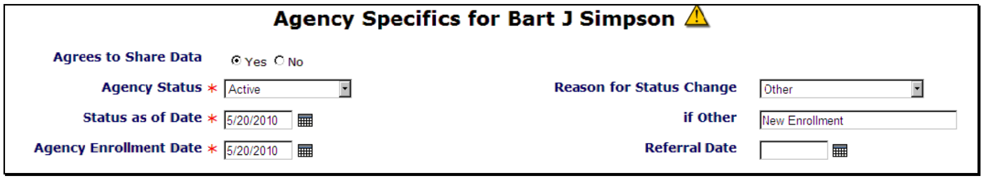
When a new or returning client goes to an agency, the provider should confirm that there is a signed and current ARIES Client Share/Non-Share Consent Form in the client's paper file. If there is no current consent form on file, the provider must:

- Inform the client about the share options and their agency's privacy practices.

- Have the client complete and sign the ARIES Client Share/Non-Share Consent Form. (Note: Providers in local share mandate counties [i.e., Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara] should not use this form. Instead they should contact their administrative agency for the appropriate form.)

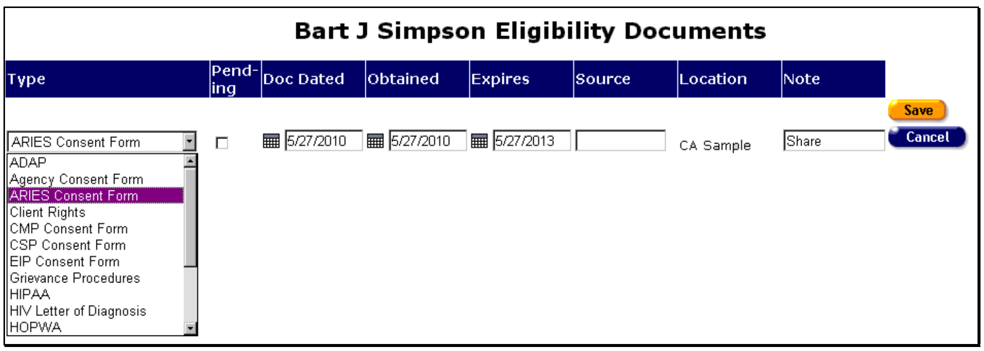
Once the completed form is obtained, the provider must then:

- Ensure that the share status to which the client has agreed is reflected appropriately on the "Agency Specifics" screen in ARIES. Users who do not have the permission to change the share status should discuss the matter with their manager or technical lead (see ARIES Policy Notice A2 regarding Managing Users).



- Figure A - Changing Client Share Status on the "Agency Specifics" Screen

- Enter "ARIES Consent Form" under Eligibility Documents on the "Eligibility Documents" screen in ARIES (see Figure A). Enter the dates the form was signed by the client, was obtained by the provider, and will expire. The expiration date is three years from the date which the client signs the form. Indicate in the Note field whether the client is "Share" or "Non-share."



- Figure B - Entering ARIES Consent Form on the "Eligibility Documents" screen

- Place the signed form in the client's paper file.

- Providers must ensure that clients renew the ARIES Client Share/Non-Share Consent Form once every three years.

Additionally, a new form needs to be signed whenever clients change their share status. Each agency is responsible for identifying changes among their clients and obtaining new forms as needed. There are two ways to identify changes in share status:

- Compare the share status on a client's "Agency Specifics" screen to the last signed consent form in the client's paper file.

- Run the Share Status Change Report, which is located under Reports > Compliance, every 30 to 60 days. Enter a Client Alert on the Agency Specifics to remind staff to obtain a new consent form when the client comes in for his or her next visit.

Compliance Monitoring

Compliance with this policy is defined as:

- All active clients must have a signed and current ARIES Client Share/Non-Share Consent Form in their files.
- All ARIES Client Share/Non-Share Consent Forms must be documented under Eligibility Documents on the "Eligibility Documents" screen in ARIES.

OA will monitor for compliance by:

- Routinely reviewing reports for each agency on how many of the clients have a documented ARIES Consent Form on the "Eligibility Documents" screen.
- Checking for consent forms as part of the chart reviews conducted during regular contract monitoring visits among OA-funded providers.

Agency managers and administrative agencies should monitor for compliance as well.

Additional Information

- The ARIES Client Share/Non-Share Consent Form, which is available in English and Spanish, can be found under Forms at www.projectaries.org. Providers in local share mandate counties (i.e., Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara) should contact their administrative agency for the appropriate form.
- Also available on this website are two documents that providers may find useful when discussing share options with their clients:
  - ARIES Information Brochure for Clients and
  - Share/Non-Share Client/Provider Information Document
- Providers needing assistance with using the "Eligibility Documents" screen, changing a client's share status in ARIES, or running the Share Status Change Report should consult the ARIES User Manual by pressing the F1 key while in ARIES or call the ARIES Help Desk at 1-866-411-ARIES (2743).

Related Policies

- ARIES Policy Notice No. A2 regarding the Managing Users
- ARIES Policy Notice No. C6 regarding the Local Share Mandate
- ARIES Policy Notice No. C7 regarding Consent for CARE/HIPP Clients